

REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

AN AMERICAN TEXT-BOOK OF GYNÆCOLOGY, MEDICAL AND SURGICAL, FOR PRACTITIONERS AND STUDENTS. By HENRY T. BYFORD, M.D., J. M. BALDY, M.D., EDWIN B. CRAGIN, M.D., J. H. ETHERIDGE, M.D., WILLIAM GOODELL, M.D., HOWARD A. KELLY, M.D., FLORIAN KRUG, M.D., E. E. MONTGOMERY, M.D., WILLIAM R. PRYOR, M.D., and GEORGE M. TUTTLE, M.D. Edited by J. M. BALDY, M.D., with 360 illustrations in text and 37 colored and half-tone plates. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 1894. 8vo., pp. 711.

This volume has evidently been prepared to attract the reader not only because of its intrinsic merit, but as well by the clearness and beauty of its typography and illustrations. In fact, the long-primer type and the half-tone plates make it one of the most readable books which we have had the good fortune to peruse. Like its predecessor, "The Text-Book of Surgery," it is the product of many authors, most of whom are well known in the special field of gynæcology. The book, however, has been well edited and the matter carefully compiled. The harmony of its conclusions and the homogeneity of its style give it an individuality which suggests a single rather than a multiple authorship. Following Chapter I, on Examination of the Female Pelvic Organs, we are presented with a chapter on the Technique of Gynæcological Operations. This is not a mere suggestion of technique in general, but a most thorough and detailed statement of the modern technique as applied to the operating-room, the surgeon, assistants, nurses, instruments, ligature and suture materials, and dressings. At the beginning of the chapter the author shows that the evolution of gynæcology to its present high position is due to improvement in the technique of its operations, and

that the one grand underlying principle of modern surgery and the animus of surgical thought is antiseptic technique. Following out this thought, the author gives a most careful and explicit description of the various details of an operation from its beginning to its completion, and the modern methods of asepsis and antisepsis applicable in each case. The text is enforced by illustrations of a complete and modern operating-room, giving a clear idea of the variety and general arrangement of its furniture. We see in this chapter little to criticise and much to commend. We are gratified to find so complete a *résumé* of modern antiseptic technique. The devotion of a separate chapter to this subject is a wise innovation. The innovation will prove an attractive feature.

Menstruation and its anomalies next claim our attention. There is little of special importance in this chapter, save perhaps the discussion regarding menstruation and ovulation, their interdependence, etc. The author acknowledges that this much-mooted question is as yet a subject of speculation, and gives only the status of professional opinion on this subject at the present time, viz.,—

- (1) That ovulation and menstruation are closely associated, but not necessarily interdependent.
- (2) That ovulation may occur without menstruation.
- (3) That conception very often occurs without menstruation.

After a chapter devoted to Anomalies of the Female Generative Organs, General Tuberculosis, and Diseases of the Vulva and Vagina, the Inflammatory Diseases of the Uterus are discussed.

If the author of this chapter is not eloquent, he at least has that earnestness which approaches eloquence. What he says is born of conviction. How he says it at once commands attention and wins admiration. After a careful study of the anatomy and physiology of the endometrium, the ætiology, pathology, symptoms, and treatment of endometritis are discussed at some length. It is in the use of the curette and his advocacy of curettage of the uterus for endometritis and acute pelvic inflammations that the author advances his most convincing arguments. In such inflammations he shows that perito-

nititis is traced through salpingitis back to endometritis; that peritonitis is not a disease *per se*, but merely "an effort on the part of nature to check a disease." The treatment of such cases by poultices or hot douches he denounces as "the method of the midwife." Primary cœliotomy he stamps as rash and irrational. Curettement and treatment of the uterus as any septic cavity is the only method which can be accepted as rational,—a method no longer new and experimental, but the one accepted by many American gynaecologists. A passing glance is given the electrical treatment of endometritis. The author regards it as unscientific, and its existence due to the "timidity of suffering womankind, who dread operation." This chapter is the strongest in the book.

It is worth the perusal of every physician. A wider dissemination of the principles which it teaches will lead to a more rational standard of treatment, and safer and more certain results.

In the chapter on lacerations of the soft parts there is nothing new. The methods already in vogue and well known are rehearsed. We notice that in the description of each operation the technique is given in accurate detail, so that even the novice would find in these descriptions a perfect guide.

Distortions and malpositions next receive attention. The author pays his respects to anteflexions by showing that the symptoms accompanying this condition are due to pathological changes in the endometrium. Dysmenorrhœa is due not to obstruction of flow, but to degenerative changes which the flexion produces. The question of sterility of uterine origin he dismisses in a few words. The obstruction theory of Sims and his followers he regards as illogical and incompetent to meet the objections raised by more recent physiological and pathological investigations. "Flexure," says the author, "undoubtedly produces degenerative changes, but it is those changes and not the flexure which prevent conception." With such premises there is but one logical treatment,—viz., curettage. The use of stem pessaries for these conditions is regarded as unscientific and unsatisfactory. "They produce discharges which they are sup-

posed to drain away. They frequently convert a simple into a purulent endometritis." The operation of hysteropexy for the correction of retropositions is given but passing notice. So valuable a procedure should receive more than a superficial comment. A more lengthy discussion of its merits or defects would add much to the value of this contribution.

Altogether this chapter is a most valuable one, and for the most part in harmony with the best scientific thought.

Uterine neoplasms receive a large share of attention. The pathology of uterine fibroids receives a most thorough and satisfactory discussion. Among the non-operative measures for relief, ergot is recommended; careful observers testifying that it not only relieves symptoms, but in all cases reduces the tumor, a number of cases being reported of the voiding of tumors under its use. Electricity is considered purely experimental; while the treatment of fibroids by the galvano-puncture is condemned in an uncompromising manner.

Among the operative procedures are considered vaginal enucleation, myomectomy, oöphorectomy, and total abdominal hysterectomy. These operations are described in detail, and the special variety of cases to which they are applicable is fully discussed. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a general consideration of the whole subject.

This is a valuable summarization. It is a succinct analysis of the different classes of cases, and the mode of procedure best adapted to each. Several pages are devoted to the sequelæ subsequent to cœliotomy for fibromyomata. A general outline of the treatment for these complications completes an exceedingly valuable and interesting chapter.

As inflammations of the female pelvis and pelvic organs constitute a very large proportion of the diseases of women, it is to be expected that the chapter on pelvic inflammation should receive extended consideration. All those conditions described by the terms salpingitis, pyosalpinx, ovarian abscess, perimetritis, parametritis, peri-uterine phlegmon, pelvic abscess, pelvic cellu-

litis, and pelvic peritonitis are treated as different manifestations of a single disease, or as the same disease attacking in its progress the different anatomical portions of the female pelvis. The causation of these varied manifestations is septic or specific infection. It is from this premise that the author deduces his subsequent conclusions. The pathology of this disease is considered at some length. The treatment offers many valuable suggestions, and will be read with interest.

The succeeding chapters treat of ectopic gestation, diseases of the ovaries and tubes, and diseases of the bladder, and the book is concluded by a chapter on after-treatment in gynæcological operations. This chapter proves a novel and interesting feature. It is full of suggestions, and will be found a valuable aid to those who desire information on this subject. It deals with a subject which has heretofore received too little consideration. It puts into permanent form a mass of knowledge which for a long time has remained traditional for the want of some one to interpret. We unhesitatingly recommend this book to those who wish to be in touch with the most recent gynæcological thought. There will be found little that is extraneous, and much that is valuable. The style in general is clear and concise, the matter is fully up to date. As a thoroughly practical book it cannot be too highly commended.

WILLIAM FRANCIS CAMPBELL.

SYPHILIS IN THE INNOCENT (SYPHILIS INSONTIVUM), Clinically and Historically Considered, with a Plan for the Legal Control of the Disease. By L. DUNCAN BULKLEY, A.M., M.D. Pp. 416; cloth, 8vo. Bailey & Fairchild, 29 Park Row, New York, 1894.

This is the essay to which, in 1891, the College of Physicians of Philadelphia awarded the Alvaregna prize for the best memoir on any medical subject. The book well merits the honor thus conferred, for the arrangement is excellent, the classification is detailed, logical and consistently followed, the subject matter is valuable and clearly presented, and the conclusions are of great practical importance.